

"Child-welfare agencies can improve," Mattingly said, "but it's hard work."

To become more community-friendly, Children Services plans to hire more translators and workers who speak foreign languages, because of the growing diversity in the county. And it will create a committee of child-welfare workers, court officials and mental-health and addiction experts to help decide where to place children with severe behavioral and mental-health problems.

"We've had such great success with Family to Family, it's time for more-revolutionary changes," Saros said.

Sabrina Martin credits Family to Family with smoothing out her relationship with her daughters.

"I don't think we would have been able to get back on track without it," she said.

SUCCESS OF THE NAGORNO-KARABAKH PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION

HON. ADAM B. SCHIFF

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, September 26, 2002

Mr. SCHIFF. Mr. Speaker, on August 11, 2002, the men and women of Nagorno-Karabakh exercised their right to vote—a right which we have cherished for more than two centuries and a right that we hope will spread across the world.

Democracy, Mr. Speaker, is at the core of our existence as a nation, and democracy and democratic values are what we fought for in Europe during two World Wars and are continuing to fight for in the war on terrorism.

As freedom loving people who stood up against tyranny, we have a duty to applaud and support others who aspire to the principles that resulted in the Declaration of Independence and the Bill of Rights.

Mr. Speaker, on August 11, 2002, the people of Nagorno-Karabakh re-elected President Arkady Ghukassian by a majority vote in what the independent election observers from the United States, Russia, Great Britain, France, Italy and Armenia called a free and transparent election.

The independent international observers, who monitored the election and the subsequent vote count, included a number of acting and former parliamentarians, former diplomats, foreign policy experts, and representatives of non-governmental human rights organizations. In addition, journalists from the United States, Russia, France, Spain, Great Britain and Armenia covered the course of the election.

The democratic presidential election of Nagorno-Karabakh, with an impressive 76 percent turnout, is evidence of the people's adherence to Western values and its determination to form a civil society and organize its affairs through a representative body based on the rule of law.

Observers from the British Helsinki Human Rights Group, which had observed 85 elections within the jurisdiction of the Organization of Security and Cooperation in Europe, stated that the election in Nagorno-Karabakh had surpassed many elections internationally recognized and approved by the OSCE and the Council of Europe, in particular, the elections in Bosnia and Kosovo.

The five independent observers from the United States, which included former high-

ranking foreign service officers and foreign policy experts, were extremely impressed with the election process and the people's resolute determination to live in freedom. One observer described it as "an impressive exercise in democracy."

Mr. Speaker, last summer I visited Nagorno-Karabakh and saw first-hand the harsh yet dramatic terrain of Nagorno-Karabakh and the rugged individualism of its people and leadership. Their compassion and conviction to forge ahead despite the difficult challenges was reminiscent of our founding fathers, who when faced with the choice of liberty or tyranny fought to live in freedom.

The people of Nagorno-Karabakh continue to live with the daily reminders of the war—landmines, collapsed buildings, and the noticeable absence of fathers, brothers and sons. Yet, they have chosen to rebuild their lives and their towns so their children will live in freedom.

Congratulations President Ghukassian and congratulations to the people of Nagorno-Karabakh for your spirit and your commitment to freedom and democracy.

TRIBUTE TO STERLING HEIGHTS FIREFIGHTERS

HON. SANDER M. LEVIN

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, September 26, 2002

Mr. LEVIN. Mr. Speaker, September 11, 2001 stands as a stark reminder of the valor, commitment, and sacrifice exhibited every day by firefighters and law enforcement officers throughout our nation. Like so many others in public life they serve the community, but they do so at great risk of peril to their own health and lives.

I am particularly pleased and proud to rise today in recognition of the careers of two distinguished firefighters from Sterling Heights, Michigan upon their retirement and as they embark upon a new phase of their lives.

Training Chief Rick Williams began his firefighting career in 1978. Since then, he has obtained numerous certifications ranging from appointment of Chief of Training in 1996, to receiving the Fire Chief's Award in 2002 for presenting the Fire Department's annual report and conducting many public education programs.

Fire Inspector John Vought was appointed a firefighter in 1978, and has received many certifications from receiving the Outstanding Firefighter of the Year Award presented by the Sterling Heights Elks Club in 1992 to the Meritorious Unit Citation for the rescue of three children from a house fire in 1989.

We are indeed grateful for the service that these two individuals have provided the community and the citizens of Sterling Heights over their long careers. They have served the public well and have received many letters of thanks and commendation from the community in response.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in thanking these men and wishing them a healthy and happy retirement.

THE NEW YORK SPECIAL JOINT SESSION OF CONGRESS

HON. JERROLD NADLER

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, September 26, 2002

Mr. NADLER. Mr. President, Mr. Speaker, today marks a historic occasion for New York and for the United States Congress. This is the first Congress that has convened here in New York since the First Congress convened here to watch President Washington take the oath of office and to pass the Bill of Rights.

We join here today not as Republicans or Democrats, but as Americans. The symbolic gesture of our joint meeting is both solemn and celebratory.

It is solemn because we come here today to honor a city devastated by the most terrible single attack on American soil in our history, and the thousands of innocent people lost in that attack. As the elected Representative for the area of New York most directly impacted by the attacks of September 11, 2001, I can tell you that my constituents are grateful for the act of solidarity with New York that we show here today. I can also tell you that they are even more grateful that Congress has rallied to help this City for the past year.

Our joint meeting today is also celebratory. One year ago, a group of vicious and heartless terrorists sought to cripple this city and this country by obliterating one of its great landmarks. It was their hope that not only would thousands be rendered lifeless, but that our way of life, our democracy, would be extinguished. Today, we celebrate the life and vibrancy of our democracy that still lives—and do so in a city that remains the most lively, diverse, and mighty on the face of the earth, despite the worst efforts of those terrorists.

It is only right that we seek out those who sought to destroy us. But bombs and bullets are merely the tools we use in our self-defense. Revenge against our foes will come not through bloodshed, but through acts defiant of their goals. For the last year, despite the aim of the terrorists to kill our national spirit, this nation has proudly and defiantly displayed the flag from our homes, our cars, our community centers, and our houses of worship. Despite the murderous foes who sought to divide us, our people have joined in concerts celebrating our country and its ideals, and vigils marking our unity.

Over two centuries ago, after stumbling through a government under the Articles of Confederation, with most of the world wishing to see our demise, we gathered here, defiant of the world and its wishes, resolved to make our great democratic experiment work. It is only fitting then, that we stand here again defiant of those who wish for our demise. Let there be no doubt, today we are telling the world that New York lives on, America lives on, and her ideals live on!

MISSILE DEFENSE

HON. BOB SCHAFFER

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, September 26, 2002

Mr. SCHAFFER. Mr. Speaker, I respectfully submit the following correspondence for the